

REMARKS

Claims 2-6, 11-24, 35, and 39 are now pending. Claims 1, 7-10, 25-34, 36-38, and 40-42 have been canceled without prejudice.

The Examiner is thanked for his kind allowance of claims 2-6, 11-24, 35, and 39.

The 35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

Claims 1, 7-10, 25-34, 36-38, and 40-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Tanno (U.S. Pat. No. 5,218,594) in view of Cato et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,548,463), Jacobowitz et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,740,145), and/or Kawai (U.S. Pat. No. 5,235,661).

All of the claims that stand rejected have been canceled without prejudice by this amendment.

Request for Allowance

It is believed that this amendment places the above-identified patent application into condition for allowance. Early favorable consideration of this Response is earnestly solicited.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the kind allowance of claims 2-6, 11-24, 35, and 39. Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance as set forth in the Office Action. However, Applicants point out that the reasons for allowability of the

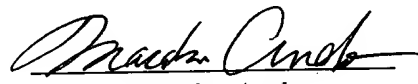
above referenced claims are not limited to the reasons for allowance as set forth in the Office Action, and that additional reasons for allowability may exist, each of which may be independently sufficient to establish the patentability of one or more pending claims.

Applicants respectfully reserve the right to introduce, articulate, or otherwise comment on any such additional reasons for allowance as may be appropriate in any future proceedings concerning the claimed invention.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
THELEN REID & PRIEST, LLP

Dated: October 8, 2003



Masako Ando

Limited Recognition under 37 CFR §10.9(b)

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